

RESEARCH ON THE INDUSTRY-EDUCATION INTEGRATION TRAINING STRATEGIES FOR RURAL CULTURAL TOURISM TALENTS IN CHINA

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Abstract. Against the background of China's specific national conditions and the current stage of rural development, and in response to new trends and changes in the tourism market, higher requirements are being placed on the knowledge structure and technical capabilities of Talents engaged in rural culture and tourism. Chinese scholars have therefore begun to examine the role of industry-education integration in improving the efficiency and quality of training for rural culture and tourism Talents. This paper finds that, although China has made progress in promoting industry-education integration, problems remain, including weak policy implementation and insufficient effectiveness of university-enterprise cooperation. On this basis, the paper proposes a collaborative framework for industry-education integration that is government-led, market-driven, linked by university-enterprise cooperation, and mutually beneficial. It further argues that the curriculum system, teaching staff, and practical training platforms should be jointly developed by educational institutions and enterprises.

Keywords: *industry-education integration; rural culture and tourism Talents; university-enterprise cooperation*

1. Introduction

The report to the 19th National Congress of the Communist Party of China proposed and summarized the logical framework and contemporary significance of the rural revitalization strategy. The report to the 20th National Congress further emphasized the comprehensive advancement of rural revitalization and the construction of high-quality development. The high-quality development of rural culture and tourism is both an important indicator and a major outcome of rural revitalization, as well as an important engine for empowering rural revitalization.

Against the background of China's specific national conditions and the current stage of rural development, new trends and changes have raised higher requirements for the knowledge structure and technical capabilities of rural culture and tourism Talents. The mismatch between existing talent supply and market demand has consequently become increasingly evident. Ma Xiaofen and Dai Bin (2022), drawing on the China Tourism Talent Development Report (1949-2021) issued by the China Tourism Academy, note that tourism talent training in China has remained closely aligned with the needs of tourism development. However, since China entered the era of mass tourism, talent shortages and supply-demand mismatches have remained persistent challenges for the industry.

The 2020 Central No. 1 Document proposed promoting the flow of talent to rural areas. In 2021, the Opinions on Accelerating the Revitalization of Rural Talent called for the cultivation of Talents for rural secondary and tertiary industries and encouraged vocational colleges to strengthen programs related to rural culture and tourism. The Central No. 1 Document on priorities for comprehensively advancing rural revitalization in 2023 further emphasized the need to strengthen the support system for rural revitalization in terms of policy and talent, vigorously develop vocational education, and deepen industry-education integration and university-enterprise cooperation.

2. Literature Review

2.1 Research on Industry-Education Integrated Training

Industry-education integrated training has become an important direction of education reform in China and worldwide in recent years. Through university-enterprise cooperation and the integration of industry, education, and research, it aims to improve the quality and adaptability of talent training so that education can better meet the needs of social and economic development.

International research on collaborative talent training began relatively early, and relevant practices are more mature, with comparatively well-developed policy support and institutional arrangements. In 1968, Ann M. Heiss began research on joint training by examining the joint training practices of the University of California and the University of San Francisco. Nick Ellis (2000) studied the cooperative training of students by enterprises and higher education institutions and gave positive recognition to this model. Existing international studies show that developed countries have accumulated relatively mature experience in industry-education integration. For example, the United States, Germany, and Australia have developed useful practices in the management, guarantee, and institutional systems of industry-education integration in vocational education¹.

China has also made progress in industry-education integration, but problems remain, including weak policy implementation and insufficient effectiveness in university-enterprise cooperation. Nevertheless, China continues to explore and improve models of industry-education integrated talent training, including strengthening top-level design and innovating integration models to promote the development of industry-education integration².

2.2 Research on Industry-Education Integrated Training for Rural Culture and Tourism Talents

In international research on rural culture and tourism, common keywords include rural tourism, impact, management, model, perception, motivation, satisfaction, destination, area, and community. Comparatively little attention has been paid to “rural tourism human resources” or “rural tourism talents.” Some studies involve the construction of rural tourism talent training bases. Bai Y. H. (2019) pointed out that the shortage of rural culture and tourism Talents has become increasingly prominent and proposed problems and countermeasures related to the construction of rural tourism talent training bases. However, there remains a lack of direct research on the training of rural culture and tourism Talents through industry-education integration³.

Chinese scholars have begun to examine the role of industry-education integration in improving the efficiency and quality of training for rural culture and tourism Talents. The trend toward integrated rural culture and tourism formats is increasingly evident. For example, the development and application of big data, the Internet of Things, and 5G technologies in rural tourism create an urgent demand for digitally skilled personnel. New formats such as “rural tourism + study tours,” “rural tourism + health care,” and “rural tourism + cultural performance” require cross-disciplinary and composite management Talents for rural culture and tourism. The transformation and upgrading of the culture and tourism industry under the requirement of high-quality development further calls for innovative and entrepreneurial Talents. Based on theoretical research, relevant policies, and practical experience, and from the perspective of industry-education integration, Li Jiao and Wei Wenjie (2020) proposed an innovative model for rural tourism talent training oriented toward college students, industry practitioners, and community residents, characterized by “government-enterprise coordination, government-university linkage, and university-enterprise cooperation”.

3. Strategies for Industry-Education Integrated Training of Rural Culture and Tourism Talents in China

This study first reviews and analyzes the research context and theoretical foundations of rural culture and tourism talent training and industry-education integration, with particular attention to relevant Chinese policy documents and the broader development background. It then conducts field investigations by visiting rural culture and tourism operators, relevant colleges, and talent training bases in several locations, mainly in Shandong Province, China. Semi-structured interviews are used to understand the current state of talent training, the implementation of university-enterprise cooperation, and practical pain points. On this basis, the following strategies for industry-education integrated training of rural culture and tourism Talents in China are proposed.

3.1 Establishing a Collaborative Framework for Industry-Education Integration

In light of the transformation and upgrading of China's rural culture and tourism industry and the trend toward diversified innovation in tourism formats, the culture and tourism market is placing new demands on composite, skilled, and digitally competent Talents in such fields as operation management, creative planning, digital culture and tourism, and cultural inheritance. Closely aligned with major national strategies such as rural revitalization and the integration of culture and tourism, deep industry-education integration should serve as the core approach. The key is to build a two-way collaborative framework between universities and rural culture and tourism enterprises as the two principal actors.

To address problems such as superficial university-enterprise cooperation and insufficient cooperation incentives, universities and enterprises should jointly build a community of shared interests, invest resources together, and share development outcomes. Guided by policy orientation and market mechanisms, a deeply integrated ecosystem should be established that is government-led, market-driven, linked by university-enterprise cooperation, and mutually beneficial. At the government level, special support policies should be introduced, matchmaking platforms should be built, and supervision and incentive mechanisms should be improved. Universities should draw on their advantages in disciplines, teaching staff, and teaching research to optimize talent training systems in response to industry needs. Enterprises should provide real job positions, training sites, and industry projects.

At the same time, the rights and responsibilities of all parties should be clearly defined, and supporting systems for regular communication, benefit distribution, and assessment and evaluation should be formulated to ensure the long-term and stable operation of the university-enterprise collaborative model. For example, local culture and tourism authorities may take the lead in linking rural tourism scenic areas, distinctive homestay clusters, and local university programs in culture and tourism to jointly build a cooperative framework. Through clearly divided responsibilities and close coordination among the three parties, industry-education integration can be implemented more effectively.

3.2 Implementing a University-Enterprise Co-Construction Model

Supported by the collaborative framework for industry-education integration, universities and rural culture and tourism enterprises should break down the barriers between talent training and industrial development. A triadic co-construction model centered on curriculum systems, teaching staff, and practical training platforms should be implemented. This model is intended to address such pain points as the separation of traditional curricula from industry practice, weak practical experience among teachers, and insufficient practice scenarios, thereby aligning education and teaching more precisely with the needs of industrial positions.

In terms of curriculum co-construction, the traditional model in which universities independently build curricula should be replaced by a more scientific and balanced one-third curriculum module system. One-third of the curriculum, namely foundational theoretical courses, should be led by universities and focus on basic Talent knowledge such as an introduction to culture and tourism, rural culture, and tourism management, thereby consolidating students' theoretical foundation. Another one-third, namely core skills courses, should be jointly developed by universities and enterprises according to the needs of new rural culture and tourism formats. Examples include practical courses on rural short-video production and operation, rural homestay management, and rural culture and tourism planning. The remaining one-third, namely job-based practical courses, should be led by enterprises and designed around real work standards, business processes, and service norms. For instance, when local universities with culture and tourism programs cooperate with rural tourism scenic areas and homestay clusters, senior enterprise operators can participate in revising syllabi and developing distinctive courses, thereby addressing the lag of traditional curricula behind industrial development.

In terms of teaching staff co-construction, a diversified and composite dual-qualified teaching team should be built through a one-third staffing structure. Full-time university teachers should account for one-third and be responsible for Talent theoretical teaching and academic guidance. Technical backbones and operations mentors from enterprises should account for one-third and be dedicated to teaching practical courses and guiding job-based training. The remaining one-third should be developed through a two-way “revolving door” mechanism between universities and enterprises. University teachers may be assigned to enterprises for temporary posts and participation in rural culture and tourism projects, while outstanding employees from rural enterprises may be selected to participate in teaching research, classroom teaching, and training in universities. This two-way process can improve both teaching capacity and practical competence, forming a high-quality faculty team suited to industry-education integrated training.

In terms of practical training platform co-construction, universities and enterprises should jointly build an intelligent and integrated practice-based education platform based on the real production and operation scenarios of rural culture and tourism enterprises. Both parties should integrate high-quality resources and connect jointly developed courses, supporting training materials, virtual simulation experiments, and job-based practical cases to a unified platform, thereby enabling the open sharing and interconnection of teaching resources. Students can use the platform to complete a full learning process that combines online theoretical learning, virtual job training, and offline field practice. Enterprises can also use the platform for employee training and talent reserve screening. In this way, the teaching process and the production process can be deeply integrated, effectively improving the job adaptability and practical competence of rural culture and tourism Talents.

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